

WO-103
Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church
Snow Hill
public worship

1888-1889

Designed by Philadelphia architect, Isaac Pursell (1853-1910), the Makemie Memorial Presbyterian church is perhaps the best documented building in Worcester County. Surviving in a collection of church papers are hundreds of records including day books, receipts, lists of materials, laborers, as well as freight costs that thoroughly document the construction of this High Gothic Revival style brick church. A short notice in the Democratic Messenger, published on March 10, 1888, announced that construction was planned to start that spring. The article related,

We learn that arrangements are being made to commence work early this spring on the Makemie Memorial Church to be erected in town. The Building Committee held a meeting on last Thursday and decided to push the work along as rapidly as possible. Mr. Purcell, the Philadelphia architect, who has been employed by the committee was present and submitted a plan which was determined upon. The committee also concluded to employ a master mason to superintend the work. The plan is a novel one after the Gothic style of architecture.

That May the schooner, George S. Richardson, arrived in Snow Hill loaded with 45,000 finishing brick from the kilns of William Perot of Baltimore.

The roughly cruciform main church is lighted by large Gothic arched windows filled with colored glass. The front street elevation is dominated by two unequal-sized entrance and bell towers sheathed with a combination of slate and metal ribs. Metal sheathed pinnacles highlight the base of each spire, whereas decorative metal finials or intricate cresting accentuate the top of each spire. Attached to the rear of the main church is a Sunday School and service wing. The sanctuary is enhanced by an exposed hammer-beam truss roof, supported in part by two iron columns.

The altar and sanctuary furnishings also carry highly decorative Gothic motifs that enrich the interior design. No other church in Worcester County repeats such an ambitious expression of the Gothic Revival.

The history of the Snow Hill Presbyterian church, however, dates to the late seventeenth century, when Francis Makemie, for whom the church is a memorial, organized early Presbyterian meetings in what was then Somerset County. Aside from the Snow Hill church he started several other congregations including one at Rehobeth on the Pocomoke River, another at the head of the Manokin River, and yet another in Accomac County, Virginia.

The original Snow Hill church, "...a plain building thirty feet long..." is thought to have been built around 1683 on a site along the river. This early building was replaced by the 1740s with a frame structure erected on a new site that was purchased formally by Adam Spence, Thomas Milbourn, and Matthew Hopkins on June 8, 1748. Transferred for L12, Lot 32 was described at the time as,

...all that Lot or Parcel of Land in Snowhill Town in the said County of Worcester whereon the protestant Presbeteriann Dissienting meeting House hath been Lately Built and now Standeth Called and Known by the Name of Lot Number thirty two--according to the Survey thereof Lately made...(Deed Book, B/78)

In 1795, the congregation decided to replace the 1740s frame building with a brick structure that served the ~~the~~ Snow Hill Presbyterians nearly one hundred years until the congregation decided to embark on the construction of the fourth edifice.

HISTORIC CONTEXT INFORMATION

Resource Name: MAKEMIE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

MHT Inventory Number: W0-103

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA:

1) Historic Period Theme(s):

ARCHITECTURE, RELIGION

2) Geographic Orientation:

EASTERN SHORE

3) Chronological/Developmental Period(s):

1870-1930 INDUSTRIAL-URBAN DOMINANCE

4) Resource Type(s):

1. STANDING STRUCTURE

a. CHURCH

2. OBJECTS

b. CEMETERY

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. W0-103

Magi No. 2401035608

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic MAKEMIE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 103 West Market Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Snow Hill ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Worcester

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church

street & number 103 West Market Street telephone no.:

city, town Snow Hill state and zip code MD 21863

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Worcester County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Worcester County Courthouse folio

city, town Snow Hill state MD 21863

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historic Sites Inventory

date 1967 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

pository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

7. Description

Survey No. W0-103

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Makemie Memorial Presbyterian church stands on the south side of West Market Street in the center of Snow Hill, Worcester County, Maryland. The High Victorian Gothic brick church faces northwest, and a cemetery is located to the south and west of the building.

Designed by Philadelphia architect, Isaac Purcell and erected in 1888-89, the single-story stretcher bond brick church follows a cruciform plan roughly with two- and three-story entrance and bell towers filling the inside front corners. Attached to the back of the main block is a single-story wing that houses the Sunday School and service rooms. Asphalt shingles cover the main roof, while the towers are sheathed with a combination of slate and metal surfaces. A brick wall extends around the perimeter of the churchyard, and it was erected in memory of John Walter Smith, a prominent local businessman who served as governor of Maryland for four years and longer as a representative from Worcester County in the Maryland General Assembly.

The northwest (main) elevation is an asymmetrical facade with towers flanking a center Gothic arched colored glass window. The rusticated red stone foundation and sandstone arches that highlight the doors and windows contrast with the smooth brick walls. Above the center window a decorative brick corbelling accentuates the gable end. Flanking the center gable is a three-story tower to the north and a two-story tower to the south. The corners of both towers are marked by buttresses that extend to a second story level. On the north face of each tower between the buttresses are Gothic arched, double-door openings. The first floor elevation of each tower is marked by double or single Gothic arched, colored glass windows, while the second floor is pierced by tri-partite windows of colored glass. The south, two-story tower is capped by a short octagonal spire with corner pinnacles topped by intricately shaped finials. The ribs, a mid-section, and the spire top are covered with metal. There is a delicate iron cresting that distinguishes the spire. The north, three-story tower is marked by large Gothic arched openings on each face of the belfry, and a taller octagonal spire rises with metal ribs and a decorative metal finial. Likewise metal sheathed pinnacles highlight each corner.

The northeast and southwest sides are similar with the gable end filled with a Gothic arched colored glass window. Smaller segmental arched windows and side doors fill the adjacent bays. The back end (southeast) of the main block is covered fully by the rear hip roof wing which is lighted by an assortment of single or paired windows.

The sanctuary occupies a tee-shaped space created by the cruciform shaped main block with an exposed hammerbeam truss roof. The two central columns that carry a pair of trusses are cast iron. The pews are arranged in a semi-circular plan with the raised altar along the south wall. The wall surfaces combine narrow, beaded board wainscoting and plaster. The sanctuary ceiling is decorated wooden ornament and tri-foil cut out designs mark the arched braces. The church furniture and chandeliers carry Gothic inspired designs. Double door, Gothic arched openings with colored glass transoms in a few cases mark the various doorways.

8. Significance

Survey No. WO-103

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1888 **Builder/Architect** Isaac Purcell, architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Makemie Memorial Presbyterian church is one of the few architect-designed buildings on the Eastern Shore for which there is a complete record of its construction in 1888-1889. Designed by Philadelphia architect, Isaac Purcell, the High Victorian Gothic brick church was erected with superior materials and craftsmanship for the time. Materials were gathered from a wide range of sources including Baltimore, Philadelphia, in addition to local craftsmen. Not only is the church distinguished by its pair of decorative entrance towers, but the structure stands out as a highly impressive landmark in Snow Hill. Historically, a Presbyterian congregation has existed in town since the church was organized around 1684. The Victorian building is the fourth structure to house the congregation. The site of the third church, a brick building erected in 1795, is located in the center of the cemetery behind the present structure.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WO-103

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Worcester County date 4/28/88

street & number Worcester County Courthouse telephone (301) 632-1194

city or town Snow Hill state MD 21863

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

2401034608

1. STATE <u>Maryland</u> COUNTY <u>Worcester</u> TOWN <u>Snow Hill</u> VICINITY STREET NO. <u>103 W. Market St.</u> ORIGINAL OWNER ORIGINAL USE <u>religious</u> PRESENT OWNER <u>Makemie Mem. Preby. Church</u> PRESENT USE <u>religious</u> WALL CONSTRUCTION <u>brick + stone</u> NO. OF STORIES <u>1</u>	HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY <u>WO-103</u> 2. NAME <u>Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church</u> DATE OR PERIOD <u>1887-89</u> STYLE <u>Gothic</u> ARCHITECT BUILDER 3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE
4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION OPEN TO PUBLIC <u>yes</u> <p>Makemie Presbyterian Church was built in 1887-89. It is constructed of brick on rough cut stone foundation with the same stone used as trim around the windows, doors, buttresses and as belt courses around the towers. It is built in the Gothic style. Essentially, the building is laid out in the form of a cross with each of the vacant corners thereof 'filled' with, two towers on the street facade and service across in the rear. On each of the four gables of the cross is a huge stain glass window. Entrance is gained through a double door in each tower. The towers have lancet windows, buttresses and octagonally shaped spires, each with a decorative finial and turrets. The east tower contains the bell and is consequently much taller than the other. All of the building has the same reddish cast and green trim and the woodwork.</p>	
5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE Endangered <u>NO</u> Interior Exterior <u>good</u> <p>The roof is covered with composition shingles and the spires with slate.</p>	
6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional) 3. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC. <u>W.P.A. Guide, p 444.</u> <u>Robertson, John W., Land of the</u> <u>Evergreen, The Eastern Shore</u> <u>News, Inc., Onancock, Va., 1968</u> <u>pp 137</u>	7. PHOTOGRAPH 9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER <u>Michael Bourne</u> <u>Maryland Historical Trust</u> DATE OF RECORD <u>Nov. 1969</u>

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION AND PHOTOGRAPHS MAY BE ADDED ON SHEET OF SAME SIZE

WO-103
MAKEMIE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Snow Hill, Maryland

B/78

John Martin

6/8/1748

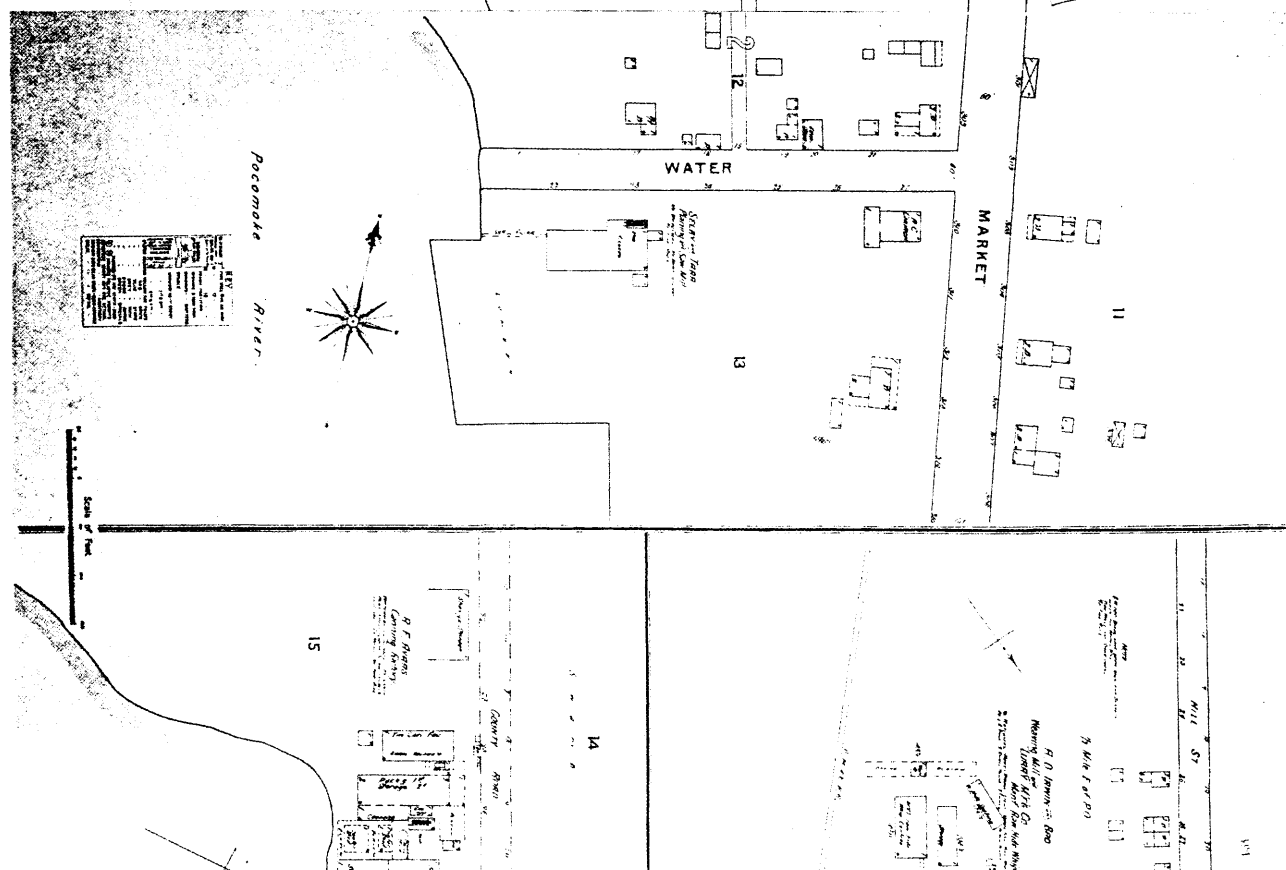
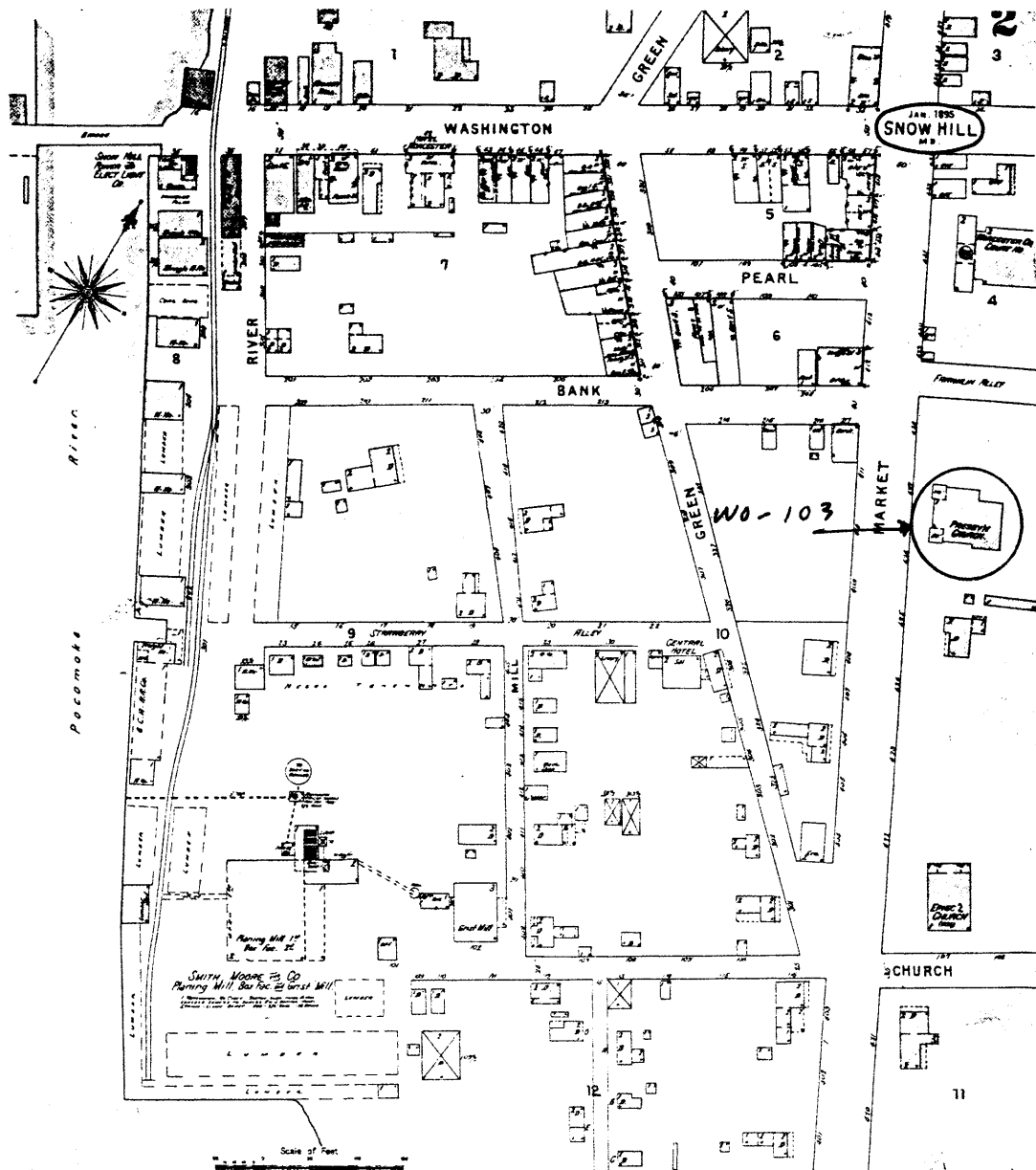
to

Adam Spence, Thomas Milbourn, and
Matthew Hopkins

£12 "...all that Lot or parcel of
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Dissenting meeting House hath
been Lately Built and now Standeth
Called and known by the Name of
Lot Number thirty two--according
to the survey thereof Lately made..."

W0-103

1895 SANBORN
INSURANCE MAP



W0-103

R I V E R

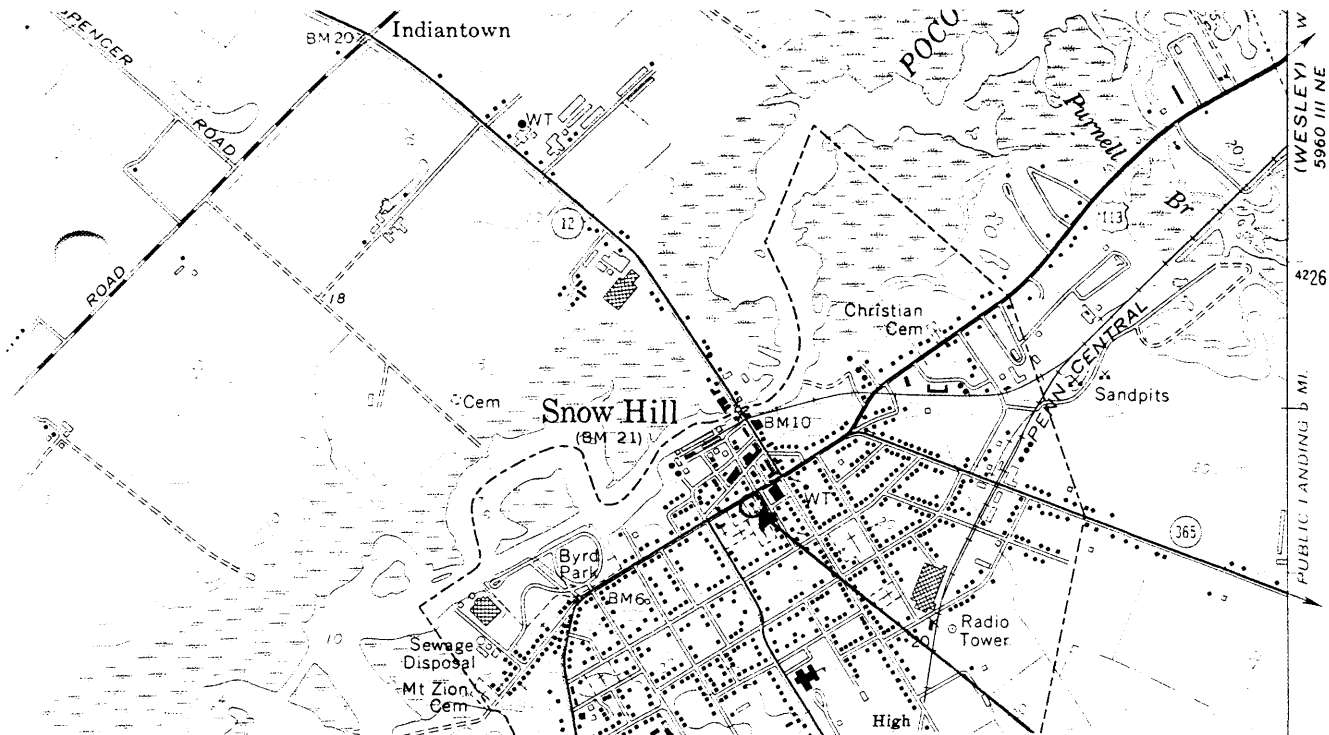
Capt W. E. Timmons



SNOW HILL

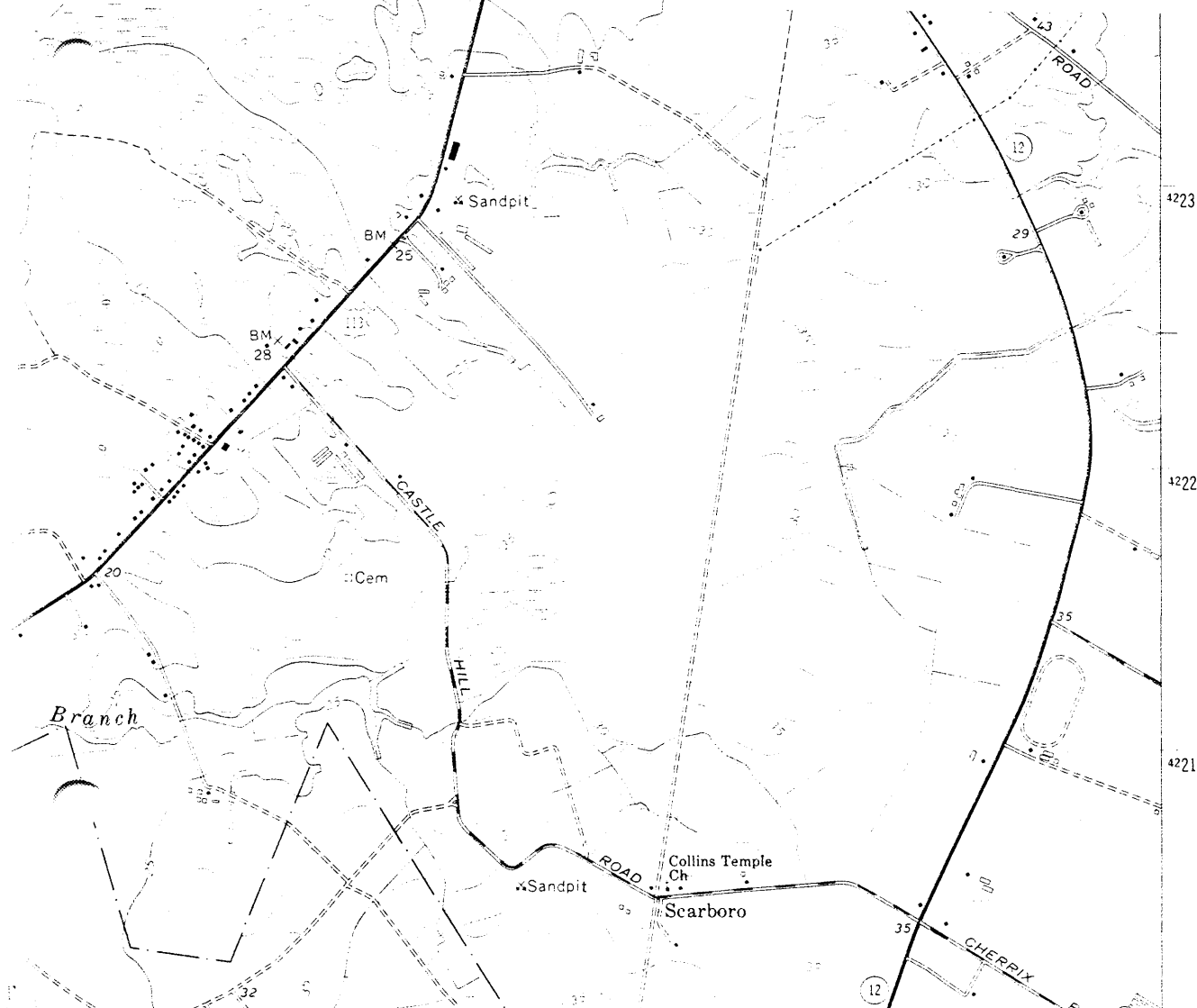
WORCESTER CO.

1877
LAKE, GRIFFING AND STEVENSON



Snow Hill
166
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WO-103
MAKEMIE MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
Snow Hill Quadrangle, 1966





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MAKENIE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SNOW HILL, WORCESTER COUNTY, MD.

NORTHWEST, ELEVATION

11/98, MICHAEL H. DAY, PHOTOGRAPHER

NEC/ MD. HIST. TRUST



Makemie Memorial Presbyterian Church WO-103

103 West Market Street, Snow H.T.